

No. 173 April 1990

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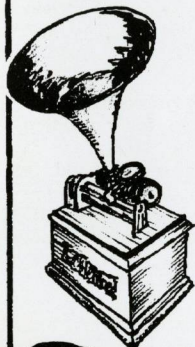
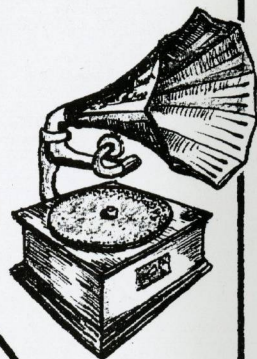
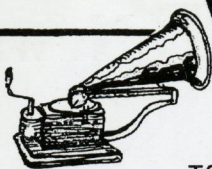
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The HILLDALE News

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I CALLED ON JACK LAW, whose cameo portrait of Arthur Haddy is found on page 17, at his home in Upper Norwood, not a mile from where Colonel Gouraud's house, "Little Menlo" used to stand. Jack was a natural-born recording engineer long before he joined Decca: he turned up a photograph showing him, barely more than a lad, standing beside disc-cutting equipment he had designed and built himself. Prominent among the workings I could discern the carcass of an Edison Gem phonograph: its feed screw provided the tracking drive for the equipment's cutting head. Jack joined Decca, at his second attempt, at the beginning of 1950, so he was just in time to cut 78 records into wax. However, most of his career was concerned with LPs, and if you own a Decca LP having a matrix number with a suffix ending in 'D', then it was Jack Law who cut it.

I am grateful to David Frost of the Decca Recording Centre for introducing me to Jack, and to Raymond McGill, Decca's Classical Marketing Manager, for providing the photograph of Arthur Haddy. On a quite different note, but while thanks are in the air, let me thank Christopher Proudfoot who, without any prompting, rushed to lend us his typewriter when he learned that ours had had to be sent for an extended stay at the Vets just at the most awkward possible moment in the preparation of this edition. Sharp-eyed members may enjoy identifying the odd pages produced on his machine.

T.C.

Front cover: A Wonderful Guy! (Mrs. Helen Rhodes - see page 12)

Berliner at the Opera

by George Taylor

THE COMPACT DISC, Symposium CD 1058, extensively reviewed by Leonard Petts in "The Hilldale News" of December 1988, contains transcriptions of 39 Berliner records made between 1890 and 1901. No fewer than fourteen of them are of opera or 'serious' song, and this caused me to wonder to what extent Berliner and his offshoot in London, the Gramophone Company, recorded opera in these very early days of disc recording.

In 1894 Berliner and his associates made two important moves. They hired Fred Gaisberg as accompanist and talent scout, and they made the first gramophone records by professional artists. By early 1897 recording studios had been established in Philadelphia and New York. In 1898 recording started in Europe: Fred Gaisberg was sent to London as recording expert, and Berliner had branches in Germany, France and Italy. In May 1899 Gaisberg and William Sinkler Darby, from Berliner's American laboratory, toured several countries in Europe. Records of many artists were made including some singers of established reputation, particularly in Italy. Sinkler Darby had already been to Russia for Berliner, and had succeeded in attracting a number of Russian stars to the recording horn. The Russian market was expanding, and Sinkler Darby, now with Gaisberg, was back in St. Petersburg in early 1900. A notable capture was the baritone Oscar Kamionsky.

By 1900 wax recording was available as an improvement on the old etched zinc process. For a time the two processes were operated together, but in 1901, when Gaisberg again went to Russia, it was with wax recording. Again, a number of leading Russian singers recorded, including the tenor Leonid Sobinov, and in a later Russian tour in November 1901, the illustrious tenor Nikolai Figner and his (now) even more illustrious wife, Medea Mei-Figner, were captured on wax. By now, however, the Berliner Gramophone Company in London had become the Gramophone and Typewriter Limited, so though branches of the Berliner company continued to operate in some countries in Europe, I have chosen the end of 1901 as the closing point of my survey of Berliner and opera.

My main source of information is Bauer's Historical Records, 1898-1908/9, second edition 1947. Bauer's listing, although a great pioneering effort for its time, is incomplete and occasionally in error. I have also used the November 1898 and February 1899 Gramophone Company catalogues (available through the CLPGS BookShelf) and the detailed listing by Peter Adamson of data for the 39 Berliners on the Symposium compact disc. Indeed, it is that listing which shows some discrepancies in Bauer's information. I assume that the CD listing (rather than Bauer) is correct, because Peter Adamson would have read the information on recording dates and so forth on the actual records themselves. Bauer reveals that a very large number of singers recorded operatic excerpts for Berliner. Most of their records were made in Europe following the establishment of the London operation in 1898. There were, however, some American-made operatics before this, not perhaps with Bettini's range of artists, but certainly contrasting sharply with Edison's lack of enterprise in that area. In Bauer I find nine singers with ten or more Berliner operatics or serious song records to their credit:

Bice Adami (1865- ?), soprano	Milan
Pauline Agussol (1863- ?), soprano	Milan
Carlo Caffetto (1870-1910), tenor	Milan
Giovanni Cesarini (? - ?) tenor	Milan
Ferruccio Corradetti (1866-1939) baritone	Milan
Nikolai Figner (1857-1918), tenor	Leningrad
Nazzareno Franchi (? - ?), bass	Milan
Ferruccio Giannini (1868-1948), tenor	New York and Philadelphia
Maria Michailova (1864-1921), soprano	Leningrad

Those making five to nine records

number fourteen, and a host of others at least made their indentations on zinc or wax. Of course, the bulk of disc production was of music hall turns and so forth, but for the infant gramophone the accomplishment of recording 'serious' music was quite remarkable.

Of the nine artists recording relatively prolifically, five made their records in Milan, two in Russia, and one each in Paris and the U.S.A. Some of the artists are (or were) well known, but four don't even get a mention in Kutsch and Riemens' lexicon. These are the minor Italian singers recorded in Milan. Perhaps they were attracted to the horn by the fee and a possible step to fame. Once there they proved to have recordable voices which were eagerly registered by the recording experts. The Italian exception is the baritone Corradetti. He started life as a journalist, but after 1892 he enjoyed an international career in opera. He was married to the soprano Bice Adami: perhaps that is why *she* was also a prolific recorder. Their daughter, Iris Adami-Corradetti, became an established singer. Corradetti later recorded for G and T, Fonotipia, Odeon and Columbia.

The French soprano Pauline Agussol (also known as Christine or Marie) was quite a catch too. She made her debut in the Paris Grand Opera in 1888, and sang opposite such stars as Patti and the De Reszké brothers. She particularly took travesti roles and played soubrettes, but she also sang in Wagner. She is represented on the Symposium CD in an aria from Meyerbeer's "Huguenots". The voice is well rounded with a firm attack. Occasional slight lapses in intonation may be due to variation in recording turntable speed.

Ferruccio Giannini, father of Dusolina, was a mainstay of Berliner's American operatic recording. Born in Tuscany, he made his opera debut in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1891, and toured America with the Mapleson Opera Company in 1892-4. Then he settled in Philadelphia (where Berliner had a studio) and undertook guest appearances and concert tours in the United States. Fred Gaisberg relates (in 'Music on Record') that he discovered Giannini with a

provincial Italian opera company in Atalantic City, New Jersey. "The next day he came to my studio and made a record of *La Donna è mobile* and *Questa o quella*. These were most successful and were the first opera excerpts we ever brought out. They filled us with pride and for many months represented our only concession to highbrow taste." Gaisberg goes on to say that many years later, Giannini had given up singing and owned an atelier for making plaster casts of well-known statues; so perhaps one might say he had a monumental career one way or another.

Bauer lists seventeen records by Giannini. Eight titles are listed in the 1899 Berliner (London) list, no fewer than five of which are not in Bauer. One of the records Gaisberg was so proud of is included on the Symposium CD, the *Questa o quella* from *Rigoletto*. The catalogue number is 983X and it was recorded in Philadelphia on 17th November 1896. It is a performance of character in acceptable sound and, if typical of Giannini's records, makes it not surprising that he recorded so prolifically. By the way, 'X' means a new recording, so strictly speaking we are not listening to Fred's original thrill. In those days it was difficult to produce more than one stamper from a matrix, and a popular piece would be recorded again, one or more times. The new records retained the old catalogue number with the suffix X, Y, etc. Bauer lists 983, presumably the original, as being recorded in New York on 25th June 1897, which is later than the rerecording. One of the dates must be wrong. Again, Peter Adamson would have much of the information on the disc itself, but of course, this was not the original.

Maria Michailova's international reputation rested almost entirely on her gramophone records. Her singing career was confined to Russia except for a tour of Japan of all places. Oscar Hammerstein endeavoured in vain to entice her to his Manhattan Opera House in New York, so she must have been popular on record even then. She also recorded for G & T, Pathé, and other labels, and at least two of her G & Ts remained in the catalogue (on E11) for

many years. On the Symposium CD she is represented in a duet with the contralto Bragina which is pleasant to listen to.

Among the prolific recorders for Berliner, the star (at least in reputation) must be the tenor Nikolai Figner. He created many parts in Russian opera following an early career in Italy. Perhaps his greatest claim to fame now is that he was the husband of the soprano Medea Mei-Figner, whose G & Ts are among the glories of the early gramophone catalogue. The same cannot be said of Figner's records. Two are given on the Symposium CD. The voice, never of a brilliant timbre, is worn, and the records do not justify his reputation.

It would prolong this article too far to cover all the classical singers recording for Berliner, but one or two deserve a mention. Among the minor artists listed by Bauer is the mezzo Ramona Galan. On the Symposium CD she sings a duet with the tenor Cesarini, one of Berliner's 'prolifics'. The aria is from *La Favorita* and has the catalogue number 54112. It was recorded, according to Peter's notes, in Milan in July 1899. Bauer lists this record as having been made by Cesarini but with the soprano Maria Galassi (as was 54113, the *Miserere* from *Trovatore*). Both Galan and Galassi are listed in Bauer as recording for Berliner, and Galan recorded two items for G and T in Madrid in 1904-5. She did indeed record a duet for Berliner, but with the bass Nazzareno Franchi (also a 'prolific'). The catalogue number of this record is 54122: similar to 54112, isn't it? Presumably Peter's 54112 does mention Galan as one of the artists?

Finally, an early experiment in balancing a chorus and an orchestra. The record, included on the Symposium CD, is the *Soldiers' Chorus* from Gounod's *Faust*, recorded in Milan in July 1900. Unfortunately the tuba is a little too prominent, which doesn't help the performance but makes for an hilarious record.

Even by 1901 the infant gramophone had come a long way. It would achieve even greater things in the hands of G and T, Victor, Fonotipia, and other illustrious organisations.

ARCHIBALD QUEST

by Peter Burgis

THIS YEAR IS THE CENTENARY of the arrival in Australia of Professor Douglas Archibald, English educationalist and travelling showman, who introduced the Edison Perfected Phonograph to the colonies. He left the UK about March 1890 and travelled to New South Wales via the United States. He reached New Jersey in April, and Sydney about early June. In New Jersey he met Thomas Edison and obtained materials for his demonstrations, including a recorded message from the inventor to the people of Australia, made on 24th April 1890. Archibald toured Australasia from June 1890 until early 1892. He departed from Perth and on the trip home gave exhibitions at Batavia, Java, Burma, Ceylon, and India, before docking at Southampton about March 1893. In both Australia and New Zealand Professor Archibald recorded many local dignitaries and theatrical personalities. He reproduced cylinders, mainly 1889 commercial issues, brought with him from London and America. He also played to his audiences a cylinder message to the Governor of N.S.W., Lord Carrington, allegedly spoken by William Gladstone. The Gladstone cylinder was offered for sale in the classified columns of a daily newspaper in February 1892.

I am researching the life of Professor Archibald and would like to discover: (1) if any Archibald recordings have survived, including the Edison message which he took back to England. He greatly valued this cylinder, and is likely to have striven to ensure its preservation. (2) if any articles by or about Archibald are known. Part 1 of his account of his 1890-1892 world trip was published in Issue No.2 of "The Phonogram" in June 1893 (entitled "The World Wanderings of a Voice"). Was this series concluded? (3) if any reader has biographical information on Archibald or knows if his personal papers are preserved. My findings will be included in an AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL DISCOGRAPHY. I would be grateful for any assistance from members. Please write to me, PETER BURGIS, [redacted] Hall, A.C.T. 2618, Australia. My thanks in anticipation.

CEDAR

by Lloyd Stickells

HOLDING THE POST of Chief Engineer at the National Sound Archive, may I be permitted to correct a few erroneous remarks and some questionable assumptions made by Gordon Reid about Cedar and the NSA, some of which may be taken to reflect on the judgement and competence of the present and past technical staff in an even less complimentary way than might normally be considered.

Firstly, a historical correction. Cedar might be said to have come about from an idea I voiced to Martin Jones, the then Neve technical director at the launch of the Neve DSP (Digital Signal Processing) console in about 1980. My question to him was that if NASA could clean up 'noisy' TV pictures from the moon and planets using computers, wouldn't it be possible to do a similar thing to sound corrupted by unwanted noise? For example, slate-filled shellac 78s. He said he thought it might, but since the cost of developing it was likely to be way out of reach of anything the BIRS (British Institute of Recorded Sound, as we then were) could contemplate, there the matter rested. However, in 1983 the BIRS became part of the British Library, coincident with the appointment of a new Director. He wanted the NSA to be the first archive with a digital console, in the hope that it might be possible to do signal processing in the digital domain which was difficult or impossible to do in the analogue domain. An alternative view was that the development of a 'black box' dedicated to this task might be more sensible.

Regardless, the decision to approach Neve was taken, and a special desk commissioned. The one feature that would set it apart from the capabilities of an analogue desk was a button marked 'Scratch Reduction'. However, after a few months Neve realised that to develop the software to undertake the task of this simple description would add an amount to

the cost more than the price of the desk itself, and Martin Jones suggested that the development work might be the sort of thing a university might undertake as a student research project: he would see what he could come up with. Thus Dr. Peter Rayner of Cambridge University Engineering Department came to be involved, with the very able assistance of a research student, Sayeed Vaseghi. These two began research into 'Digital Scratch Reduction' possibilities, (on a BBC microcomputer for the first year or so, and with only one sample of a broken record whose musical content must have driven them mad.) Because the Neve desk was an adaptation of proven architecture it soon became apparent that the desk would be ready long before any usable software, and the decision was taken to abandon thoughts of building scratch reduction into the console, but to make it a 'stand alone' system: a dedicated 'black box' in other words. This unfortunately left the Neve desk as a rather expensive programmable equaliser, and in fact rather less capable of 'cleaning up' old material and records than equipment we already used. In any case, my philosophy in wanting the means to remove crackle from 78s was simply to find a way of being able to present to listeners, in-house or as re-issues, the message with minimal interference from the medium, not to clean up the whole collection regardless.

No archivist worth his salt is going to 'clean up' material for preservation if the original is unlikely to remain available. He will make as faithful a copy as possible for preservation, and a 'cleaned up' version for presentation, a practice I have followed, and do follow, wherever possible. In any case, cleaning up is a very subjective process, with no two people in total agreement as to how far the process should go. Until recently, with systems such as Cedar or Sonic Solutions NoNoise (and even then arguably) any attempt at noise reduction, static or dynamic, implied a degree of treble reduction which inevitably had some effect on the wanted signal. (There are, anyway, those who think their 78s don't sound right without crackle).

How many LP or even CD re-releases of old recordings does one come across that have had the treble rolled off at about 3kHz to reduce the crackle because the engineer or producer thought it sounded better? And if these modern transfers were the only copies available, there would now be no chance of using newer techniques that might remove the background noise, due to the recording medium, but leave the wanted signal virtually untouched. To deny future engineers the chance to do a better job with some as yet undeveloped technique because the original, or as near a facsimile as possible, was no longer available, would be nothing short of vandalism.

For the very obvious reason of having 'back-up' copies available for listeners, and to guard against loss or catastrophic failure (e.g., dropping a 78) the BIRS had begun the preservation copying of old deteriorating and sometimes unique material long before 1983; in fact we may have been doing more before then than since. The programme did certainly not start only four years ago, as Gordon's piece implied.

The copying has to be done on the materials currently, commonly, and economically available, and this (at least, until now) has meant magnetic tape in one form or another. As to being more stable media, I am extremely doubtful whether today's media ARE more stable than the old materials of wax and shellac. Flexible magnetic media are nowadays almost exclusively based on polyester, one of the man-made plastics, all of which carry the seeds of their own destruction, we are told.

They will therefore have a finite life, even though it may be tens or (perhaps in the case of polycarbonates) hundreds of years away, if the preliminary results from our accelerated life tests are any indication. In the case of tapes, not least in importance is the life of the binder holding the oxide (or pure metal) coating to the base. It will not be easy to recover any meaningful signal from a pile of dust in the bottom of the box which will be the result if coating and backing

no longer stick to each other. Only forty years after their introduction we are already seeing the deterioration of some vinyl LPs as their polymers begin to break up, giving rise to a much noisier surface than in their new state. And we all know what happens to polythene buckets and clear plastic beakers after a few years. Yet there is little evidence, that I have seen, that shellac records, or even wax cylinders, if stored in reasonable conditions, have in any way deteriorated in the hundred or so years they have been around. To say that the end of their storage life is fast approaching seems a total nonsense.

It is a different matter if storage conditions have been less than optimal, wax cylinders in particular being a fine mould culture medium in the wrong conditions as, indeed, are direct cut 'acetate' records (which I suspect Gordon was actually alluding to): they, too, have a finite life, even if stored ideally, although they can still be perfectly playable after fifty years. I wonder if the same can be said for video tapes and DAT tapes (which we are now using for certain categories of recording) not only because of any deterioration in the medium, but perhaps even more because of the non existence of playback hardware. I would be willing to bet that the signal on a well-stored shellac 78 or wax cylinder will be more easily recovered in 100 or even 50 years time than that recorded on any form of digital tape. Even if the hardware is still available to play them, the tracks on a DAT tape, for example, are very narrow (in fact, ten would fit across a human hair) and the long term dimensional stability demanded of the base material to allow the heads to follow them accurately some years hence is very high indeed.

One can only use materials that are currently and commonly available, and economic necessity more than technical considerations often dictates the reasons for their use at the moment. A three-hour video tape costs less than a fiver, and although their use may necessitate a re-copying programme rather earlier than might

have been the case with $\frac{1}{4}$ " tape, one hour of quarter-inch open-reel tape costs around £12, a very big difference.

Optical disks may be the way to go but, at the moment, 'archival' quality disks, that can be written to directly, cost several times more per recorded hour than open-reel tape, and while this may still be a cheap way of storing encyclopaedias and the like, it is expensive for audio. However, there are hopes that, in the not too distant future, technological advances in the manufacture of these disks may both bring the cost down and put the storage capacity up by a significant factor. There is also the (so far) unresolved question of standards for encoding these disks. It would be highly dangerous to set

a lead and find later that everyone else was going in a different direction.

My own (slightly tongue-in-cheek) view is that if longevity of medium and signal were the only criterion, then perhaps digital wire recorders might be an answer although, as anyone who has handled early wire recordings can testify, this material does have other problems!

Finally, I have to say the irony is that, for commercial reasons, it has so far not been possible to provide the Cedar system for use within the National Sound Archive. A separate company has been set up to exploit the technology, which is how Gordon Reid and his staff came to be involved. Leaving us where we started.

...and a word from Rick Hardy

I READ THE ARTICLE on the Cedar method of sound cleaning with some astonishment. The writer, Mr. Gordon Reid, is obviously a competent electronics and computer expert, but I begin to wonder if he has ever seen a 78 in his life.

I assume from his article that he only works from DA tapes and that transcriptions from disc are made by others, otherwise how could he make such statements about the lasting qualities of music stored on 78s? Robert Parker, a man experienced in transcribing 78s to CD, has stated that the 78 record is by far the most durable method of sound recording devised, and I doubt if there are many collectors who would disagree. Apart from a few companies who made records from materials other than shellac (papiermache' etc.) the vast

majority of 78s have proved to be immensely durable, the only deterioration caused to them being that of steel needles and heavy soundboxes.

Even despite this physical assault, most of them have survived in very listenable condition. Mr. Reid's statement that "the time when 78s become useless is fast approaching" is even more ludicrous. My substantial record collection dates from 1898, and except for a few examples that have been badly treated, suffers not at all from time-induced degradation.

Mr. Reid does not know what he is talking about when he says Cedar can remove thumps caused by the seams in early cylinders. What seams? I have never seen a cylinder with a seam, and I don't know anyone who has. Does Mr. Reid think cylinders were moulded in two halves like milk bottles?



Pathé Records in Britain

PART 4

by LEN WATTS & FRANK ANDREWS

IN AUGUST 1921 American Pathé relinquished control of British Pathé, which returned to the fold of the French company, now known as La Compagnie Générale des Machines Parlantes Pathé Frères Paris, but the American 'Actuelle' machines mentioned before were being energetically promoted, as were the new Actuelle discs. Actuelle records, an innovation of the Pathé Frères Phonograph Corporation in the USA in September 1920, were a new departure for the Pathé enterprises, in that they were of needle (lateral) cut. The British version of the Actuelles was introduced by the American company in the month that it conceded control of Pathé Frères Pathéphone Ltd. to the French company, August 1921. At first the 10" and 12" discs had only pink labels at their centres. They were priced at 3s.0d and 4s.0d each accordingly (15p and 22½p). The repertoire, aside from new issues, drew upon American masters and French and British recordings, some of the latter having been issued on Pathé discs as early as 1910. As with the contemporary Pathé discs, artists of 'celebrity' status were issued on more expensive records, but within the same catalogue series which began at 10100 with the 10" and 15100 with the 12" size. Many of the Actuelle issues were put out contemporaneously on the Pathé discs. The first Actuelle with an ivory

label was a 10", priced at 4s.0d (20p), issued in July 1922, but no companion 12" disc was issued before a general price reduction. In January 1923 the green labelled Actuelles were introduced, with the 10" at 5s.0d (25p) and the 12" at 7s.6d (37½p). In November 1923 came the reduction in prices. Pink labels went down to 2s.6d. and 3s.6d. (12½p and 17½p), Ivory 10" to 3s.0d (15p) and green labels down to 4s.0d and 6s.0d (20p and 30p) respectively. An Ivory 12" disc at 4s.6d (22½p) was introduced in March 1924. During the period when Actuelles were on sale three other

catalogue categories were introduced for specialised repertoires. In February 1922, under pink labels, a Jewish/Hebrew series was begun at 17001 with numbers allocated irrespective of size. In July 1925 a special supplement of recordings by French artists was published under the name "The Vogue of Paris" with records numbered in an F.500 series, the more celebrated artists having Ivory labels. All were 10" issues. Also during 1925, on 12" pink labels, was issued a series of recordings of readings of poems by renowned poets in the English language, including Shakespeare, plus two British politicians' speeches. They were given an R.1 catalogue series. In 1927 electrically recorded Actuelles appeared on the April list. There were never any



electrically recorded Pathé discs issued by Pathé Frères Pathéphone Ltd. In 1928 all new Actuelles bore only the ivory labels. The earlier labels did not bear the trade mark 'Pathé' in long-hand script although the red coq standing on a disc was present. The 'Pathé' name trade mark appeared in red at the top of the labels on the later issues. But now, back to the main sequence of events.

In November 1921 the British catalogue of phono-cut records was brought up-to-date by a supplement of 32 pages on pink paper. A soundbox for Actuelle records was announced at 25s.0d (£1.25), whilst two grades of soundbox were available; the "Universal" for phono-cut records, at 10s.6d and 35s.0d (52½p and £1.75) and a new "Playall" at 35s.0d.

The Manchester Gramophone Society's meeting consisted of a demonstration by Pathé Frères Pathéphone Ltd. of some of their products, including the Actuelle machine and records. The Actuelle (said publicity literature) was so named because the tone was equivalent to the actual sound. Strange, when many Actuelle records were dubbings from centre-start discs!

In January 1922 another attempt was made to play records without the familiar soundbox and tonearm. This was the 'Difisor'; again a parchment cone as in the Actuelle, but lying parallel to the record and having a sapphire stylus at the apex of the cone, for playing phono-cut records only.

In March a new scheme was launched which appeared to put pressure on dealers to take the latest records: perhaps business was falling off. They could buy one new record for 1s.8d (8p) provided they returned three old records.

In America Pathé was being reorganised to make and market radio accessories, with phonographs and records almost relegated to the side-line. It was to be called the Pathé Sound Wave Corporation. Negotiations were going on with the French firm to use the name Pathé on radio products.

From February 1923 all export Pathé recordings from the U.S.A. were to be needle-cut Actuelles. Collectors will have noticed American-labelled Pathé records with a small diamond-shaped sticker over the catalogue number, and bearing an English-issue number. No evidence has yet been unearthed, but it seems more than likely with the aforesaid announcement that American Pathé unloaded their stocks of phono-cut records onto the British market. American labels were coloured all over according to category: black, purple, grey, gold, but it will be recalled that the English 'Scroll' label had a coloured panel in an otherwise black label. So, these little diamond-shaped stickers, bearing an English number, were coloured the same as the panel would have been on a Scroll label issue.

In April 1923 there was a promotion of Pathé records to play on "all phonographs using steel needles". Perhaps it was in conjunction with this campaign that Pathé began sub-contracting pressing work, for at that time they were pressing needle-cut Scala Ideal Records for the Scala Record Co. Ltd. of City Road, London E.C. They and other sub-contracted pressings bore mirror-wise stamper dates scratched on the surface of the discs, a practice which started on Pathé centre-start discs in 1912. This same month saw Pathé once again in court, this time to defend an action brought by Phyllis Lett, the contralto. Pathé had reissued some 13-year-old records of Miss Lett, intimating that they were new. Several witnesses testified how poor they were and, after hearing one of them, the Judge agreed. Carrie Tubb (who had made a number of Pathé records) and Sir Edward Elgar gave supporting evidence. Pathé agreed to withdraw the records and destroy the masters.

In August a special list of Scottish records was published, and the March 1922 scheme, whereby dealers could get one new record cheaply by returning three old ones, was modified to a one-for-one basis.

The twenties was a period for popular dance music, and most dance items issued on the pink Actuelle label also appeared

What do you look for in a Gramophone record?



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is daily increasing

—increasing at the same high speed as the call
for the out-of-date needle-played gramophone
and record is decreasing.



**THE SECRET OF THE UN-
EQUALLED PATHE TONE**

**lies in the highly
ingenious Sap-
phire Sound-box**

IN conjunction with the unique construction of the
Pathé cabinet, its perfected internal mechanism,
and the unrivalled Pathé recording, the
Sapphire Sound-box is guarantee against that
metallic, ear-distressing noise which, usually, so mars
the beauty of the performance. The highly-polished
Unwearable Sapphire Ball glides smoothly along its
course, ensuring a tone pre-eminently natural and
unalloyed. Unlike the sharp-pointed steel needle, it
cannot scratch or wear the record. And remember—

**NO NEEDLES TO CHANGE
—NO NEEDLES TO BUY!**

January 1921

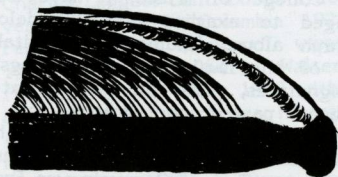
on the black Scroll label. Many of these dance bands were of American origin, some under pseudonyms.

In November 1923 Brunswick Cliftophone records were on sale at The Chappell Piano Company of Bond Street, London. Matrices were imported from the Balke Collender Company of America. These, too, had the mirror-wise date scratched on, indicating that they were processed by Pathé at Stonebridge Park.

In the late Spring of 1924 Pathé began pressing Homochord records from Actuelle matrices. These can be distinguished by their 'C' and 'HC' prefixed catalogue numbers.

An export label pressed by Pathé for Australasia was the 'Grand Pree', a white label bearing a blue swan on an orange background. It is not known whether this was Pathé's own label or that of a proprietor Down Under, but all the recorded material under this label is Pathé. Another make of record, also pressed for Australasia it is thought, was the 'Vox Humana'. Only one example has been seen by us, the label printed in green and black on white paper. It depicted two cherubs blowing upon serpentine horns. The example seen was pressed from Pathé masters.

A peculiarity present with all edge-start Pathe discs is a slightly raised edge in cross-section. One can only conjecture the reason for such a



feature. With needle-cut discs, when playing begins there is only a faint hissing sound when the needle first rides on the plain outer rim of the record; then there comes a definite 'plop' as the needle finds the recorded groove. With phono-cut records no difference in sound is experienced between the outer rim and the moment when the needle finds the groove so that, with that type of disc

one could not be sure, when lowering the soundbox, that the needle had located. The turned-up edge of the disc would have helped prevent the sound-box from sliding off the disc. If that is the correct interpretation of the raised edge for phono-cut discs, that characteristic would have been useful for both types of disc, which is why it is evident on many sub-contracted pressings, including Brunswick-Cliftophones, Brunswicks of British Brunswick Ltd., and Henecy. As other labels are unavailable, at this time of writing, it is inappropriate to mention them here.

Another label pressed for the Scala Record Company was the 'Grafton High Grade', introduced towards the end of 1924 using American Perfect and English Actuelle matrices. Two other labels pressed by Pathé at this time were the pink and blue Gamage and a blue Henecy for a Dublin firm. Pathé's vertical-cut scroll-label records, mostly containing popular dance and vocal numbers, continued to be produced in England up to May 1927, still made by the transfer-from-cylinder method and acoustically recorded, but after this date there is no more mention of them.

There was one final venture by Pathé in England; the electrically-recorded 10" Pathé Perfect record launched in December 1927. There were to be always 50 records to choose from, new ones being issued at the same rate as older ones were withdrawn. This venture came to an end on December 1928 after only 136 issues.

The English Pathé story comes to an end when Columbia acquired the business in 1928, although the final winding-up order was not effected until 9th October 1933. The Official Receiver was informed in 1928 that the British business had always run at a loss, being financed throughout by the French company. When the business closed, all leasehold and freehold premises were sold and debts paid, with the exception of nearly £21,000 owing to the French company.

Pathé in France were kept going by the Columbia company, and later by the EMI combine. The Pathé label still exists in France to this day.

Lighter Sides

by PETER CLIFFE

GUY d'HARDELLOT

"IN COCHRAN'S DRAWING ROOM I made the discovery that Guy d'Hardelot, the ballad composer whom I met there for the first and only time, was a woman," wrote Vivian Ellis in his autobiography "I'm on a See-Saw" (Michael Joseph: 1953). That was in 1925 when Ellis, making his mark as a composer but not yet famous, was hoping C.B. Cochran would commission some of his songs for his forthcoming '1926 Revue'.

It is a popular misconception that the great years of balladry ended with the reign of Victoria. Certainly much of the cloying sentimentality disappeared, and the dreadful morbidity, but the brief Edwardian era, and that of George V which followed, saw concert ballads of great originality and charm created by such varied talents as those of May H. Brahe, Carrie Jacobs Bond, Teresa del Riego, Amy Woodforde-Finden, Dorothy Forster, Herbert Oliver, Eric Coates, Haydn Wood, Charles W. Cadman and Wilfrid Sanderson, to name but a few.

No less esteemed was Guy d'Hardelot, whose professional name was not a mere fanciful appellation, reminiscent of mediaeval romance, but in a sense her real one. She was born Helen M. Guy in 1856 at the Chateau d'Hardelot in the Pays de Calais, not far from Bologne. Her mother, of Irish and Huguenot French extraction, was a gifted singer and pianist. She encouraged her young daughter's musical aspirations. Her father, either English or of English descent, did not. A hard-bitten captain, he imposed on his resentful womenfolk the iron discipline of the sea.

Nevertheless, Helen managed to escape from a father whom she did not greatly love, for at the age of 15 she went to Paris, where she studied at the Conservatoire under Renaud Maury, receiving encouragement from composers Benjamin Godard and Charles Gounod, and from the famous operatic baritone Victor Maurel. Showing great promise as both singer and pianist she became in due course a Professor of Diction and Singing. Some time afterwards she married William Rhodes, said to have been a charming but hard-drinking individual. The marriage was not a success and eventually they separated. Her unpublished memoirs (which I have read) make no mention of her husband; and in Who's

Who she stated only that she had married "an Englishman". Nevertheless, she continued to call herself Mrs. Helen Rhodes.

In 1896 she accompanied Emma Calvé on a lengthy tour of the U.S.A., afterwards making her home in London. She established herself as a song composer, her many ballads, delicately fashioned, enjoying a considerable vogue, while her house in Regent's Park, once owned by the great actress Sarah Siddons, became a meeting place for leading artists of her time, until the lease ran out and the building was demolished.

Her nephew, Rear-Admiral Royer M. Dick, once recalled to me how, as schoolboy or naval cadet, he used to attend her afternoon salons, meeting Calvé, Melba, McCormack, and such eminent stage personalities as Ellen Terry, Evelyn Laye, Ivy St. Helier, Clara Evelyn, José Collins, Seymour Hicks and his wife Ellaline Terriss.

Through the great courtesy of the Royal College of Music I have been privileged to examine Guy d'Hardelot's autograph album, finding it a veritable mirror of the musical past. Alongside the signatures, some of them undated, had been pasted photographs now of great rarity. Cécile Chaminade had penned a tribute "à ma charmante collègue"; and in similar vein was Frank Lambert's friendly note "from your colleague and admirer".

An elaborate and illustrated autograph, dated 1897, was from "son bien dévoué, F. Paolo Tosti"; and two others, also illustrated, bore the signatures of Maude Valérie White and Amy Woodforde-Finden: three distinguished ballad composers saluting another no less accomplished.

Among other composers who penned their messages, usually with a few bars of their music, across the thick pages of her album, were Alberto Randegger (1897), Jules Massenet (1899) with a musical quotation from "Thaïs"; Moritz Moszkovsky (1902); and Luigi Denza (1908). Two complete pages, including an excellent photograph, were devoted to Emma Calvé, long a close friend, whose five-line salutation was dated 1896, the year of the tour. Elsewhere the famous Welsh tenor Ben Davies offered to sing her 'Songs of Araby', although in what year was not disclosed.

Violinists had added their autographs too: Kreisler in 1907, Heifetz in 1925. Marie Corelli, controversial author of "Ardath", "The Sorrows of Satan" and "Barabbas", had attempted a somewhat too ornate calligraphy, also, alas, undated.

As with many song composers in that more leisurely age, Guy d'Hardelot's output was considerable, but there is space to mention only a few of her songs and those who recorded them. Her first success was in French, "Sans Toi", but in 1901 came "Three Green Bonnets" (lyric Ada Leonora Harris) recorded in March 1930 by Gracie Fields (Regal-Zonophone MR.1917). "Because" appeared in 1902 and was her most successful song. With a lyric by Edward Teschemacher (who later called himself Edward Lockton) it sold over a million copies as sheet music. Naturally, such an immensely popular ballad was widely recorded. Sergeant Charles Leggett contributed a cornet solo version in 1912 (Columbia 1923); Maud Perceval Allen (soprano) waxed it in 1915 (Columbia 2641); Walter Glynn (tenor) did so in May 1929 with a violin obbligato by Marjorie Hayward (HMV B.3210); David de Groot (violin) and Herbert Dawson (organ) duetted in May 1930 (HMV B.3512); Albert Sandler and his Orchestra transformed it into a Palm Court serenade in December 1931 (Columbia DB.794); and Mario Lanza almost made an aria out of it in 1951 (HMV DA.1982). It is still heard from time to time. "I Hid my Love (lyric G. Clifton Bingham) came out in 1903. Violet Essex sang it enchantingly in August 1912 (Columbia 2159). "My Message" (lyric Julian Gade) was published in 1911,

and Hubert Eisdell recorded it a year or two later (HMV B.739).

Other successes by Guy d'Hardelot were "A Garden of Love", recorded by Walter Wheatley (tenor) for Columbia 1450, issued in 1910; "I Know a Lovely Garden", recorded by John Bardsley (tenor) in 1908 (Columbia 1034); and "In the Great Unknown", which Bardsley waxed two years later (Columbia 1356). Finally one must not forget the much recorded "Wait!" (lyric Arthur Leslie Salmon) which many well-known singers put on wax in 1916, the year of its publication. Indeed, Hubert Eisdell did so twice; in September for HMV B.775 and in October for Columbia L.1121. Ruby Heyl (contralto) also recorded it in October (HMV B.784), and a version by Fraser Gange (tenor) was issued that month (Columbia 2699). The pretty melody was given smooth treatment in November 1927 by Albert Sandler and his Grand Hotel (Eastbourne) Orchestra (Columbia 4661) but, lacking the staying power of "Because", the song gradually faded away after the Twenties.

Her last song was "Dream", probably published in 1934. As far as I am aware it was never recorded. By then, of course, record manufacturers had ceased to regard concert ballads as money-spinners, although both Peter Dawson and John McCormack were still giving them loving treatment.

Guy d'Hardelot had a decided flop on one occasion, as she herself ruefully admitted. The song "A Lesson with a Fan" aroused no interest at all, and I know of no recording. A shrewd and witty woman who had created some memorable songs, she was unlikely to have been deterred by one non-starter. She died in her St. John's Wood home on January 7th 1936, being then in her 80th year.

I should like to record my indebtedness to Admiral Royer M. Dick for so much information about his gifted Aunt Helen, and for the rare photograph of her, taken when she was young.

Wherefore art thou ?

by Rick Hardy

LAST MONTH, WHILST perusing the pages of Equity Journal (the in-house magazine of the acting profession) I noticed among the list of those who had unclaimed money waiting for them the name of ROMEO BERTI.

Now I had first come across this name a couple of years back when browsing through a second-hand shop in Watford, where I found some records by Romeo Berti. The shop-owner had obtained them from a house clearance in the Regents Park area of London: they were all from the early years of the century. Among others I remember one was a cracked 'Excelsior', and two or three were single-sided 'Columbias'. I wanted to purchase the discs but I am afraid the shopkeeper was one of those we have all met, who imagined he had a treasure-trove instead of discs worth a few pounds by a virtually unknown artist. Be that as it may, I didn't get them, so, except for noticing later that Romeo Berti had also recorded for the 'Nicole' label, and seeing his name mentioned in Roland Gelatt's "The Fabulous Phonograph", I forgot about the matter. I will, however, quote from Gelatt's book:

"Thus in 1905 and 1906, Columbia had issued a number of standard arias and duets performed by lesser lights of the Metropolitan Opera, the soprano Gina Ciaparelli and the baritone Taurino Parvis, as well as some selections sung by Romeo Berti, 'a comparatively new singer with a phenomenal voice such as Caruso and many other celebrated tenors possessed when they were young and their voices were fresh and in their prime'. So read the advertising copy. But, woefully, Berti's singing on records served only to emphasise the widely appreciated virtues of Caruso's Red Seals."

My interest freshly aroused, I returned to the second-hand shop to see if I could obtain some more information. After all, if Equity were holding money for him he must have done some TV work or such in the fairly recent past. I realised it was a possibility that it was

Romeo Berti himself who had passed away in the flat in Regents Park around 1987, despite the fact that, if it was him, he must have been well over one hundred years old!

The owner of the second-hand shop confirmed that the deceased person was indeed called Romeo Berti. He said he had a signed photo of him that he had kept along with the records. I had visions of discovering the longest-lived recording artist of all time, but when I saw the photograph I realised this wasn't so. It showed a middle-aged man dressed as a gypsy and playing the violin. I would say it was taken around 1960, when the 'real' Romeo Berti would have been at least 80 years old. However, it was signed 'Romeo Berti' so I assume this was a son with the same name: otherwise, why would he have had the original Berti discs?

It seems that Romeo Berti junior died without heirs, and according to the second-hand dealer, hundreds of other 78s were left in the flat, which he - the dealer - couldn't be bothered to take. He only took the Berti discs because he thought they were made by the deceased. In circumstances like this it is not unusual for local council authorities to clear out such 'rubbish' at public expense, and to dump the contents at the nearest municipal tip. If this happened, who knows what slices of recording history died with the unfortunate Mr. Romeo Berti junior?

London Meetings

at the Bloomsbury Institute, 235
Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2
on Tuesdays at 7.00 p.m.

17th April Charles Levin:
MAINLY FOR PLEASURE

15th May Peter Adamson:
NO WANDA!

19th June: Dominic Combe:
A CYLINDER PROGRAMME USING
A MODEL 'B' FIRESIDE PHONOGRAPH

ARTHUR HADDY, one of the great figures in the history of British recording, died in December, aged 83. As Decca's Chief Sound Engineer he helped Edward Lewis to transform Decca from a comparatively lightweight company into an international giant. Those who have read John Culshaw's fine book "Putting the Record Straight" will be familiar with Arthur Haddy's name, but it is not one known to the general public. Here is an account of his career, together with an affectionate (although undoubtedly "warts and all") portrait from one who worked alongside him.

The Man who Invented

ARTHUR CHARLES HADDY was born on 16th May 1906 in Newbury, Berkshire. He was educated there at St. Bartholomew's Grammar School. His professional career began when he was apprenticed to C.F. Elwell Ltd., radio engineers; he then moved on, as a junior employee, to the valve division of the Western Electric Company.

Arthur Haddy's interest in electrical recording was aroused when he became engaged to the daughter of baritone Harry Fay, singer of comic songs on recordings made for many companies. One day Haddy accompanied Fay to the Crystalate Company's Hampstead studios to observe a recording session. He came away knowing that he could design better recording equipment than that he had seen in use. Eventually he left Western Electric and joined Crystalate, where he was responsible for the improved electrical recordings evidenced by the 8" Eclipse records (as sold by Woolworth's) and Crystalate's own new Rex records.

When Crystalate's record business was taken over by the Decca Record Co. Ltd. in 1937, Haddy became a Decca recording engineer, and eventually attained the position of Chief Engineer. His great interest was in the design of the dynamic type of recording head. This led him on to the widening of the recorded frequency spectrum, eventually to be presented to the public as FFRR (Full Frequency Range Recording). Haddy wrote that, until 1939, there was very little money for experiments, but much development had taken place in designing Decca's first moving coil cutter.

During the war the armed services asked for a means of recording

submarines' propellor noises, which had frequencies attaining 12,000 c/s. It was thought possible thereby to distinguish friendly submarines from those of the enemy. Haddy recalled that at Decca they had no idea how to achieve such recordings.

The entire experimental laboratory was moved to his own house in a small village in Hertfordshire. All the plant necessary to manufacture disc records was erected in a room at the back of his house, where recordings were produced to meet the needs of Coastal Command for the training of aircraft crews. That was the start of FFRR.

The gramophone record assisted the war effort in other ways. Lectures were recorded having 'blips' in with the text: they activated a light to illuminate a picture. The system was used to train men in the disposal of unexploded bombs.

Again, the code signals of the German night fighter pilots were recorded. By filtering out all unwanted background noises the German nightfighter procedure was eventually decoded.

By the end of the war the frequency range of Haddy's cutting heads had been greatly extended, although he described the surface noise as appalling. A means of overcoming that was to give the bottom of the groove a 1/1000" radius, and then use a 2/1000" sapphire stylus.

In America, around 1947, Columbia had begun recording 16" discs at 33-1/3 r.p.m. Edward Lewis went there to observe and, knowing that American Decca would have to compete with Columbia, he got Haddy and his team in



ARTHUR HADDY (Picture by courtesy of DECCA)

England to switch to acetate masters so that they could be "dubbed" as long playing discs, the acetates being destroyed in the process. Thus, American Decca's "London" LPs appeared well before Decca's own LPs were placed on the market here. This was before tape-recording was in general use.

With tape, stereophonic recording became feasible, and Haddy and his associates produced a method of one carrier being at 14,000 c/s, over which a carrier frequency of 16,000 c/s was recorded, making it necessary to produce

a cutting head capable of up to 32,000 c/s, and a pick-up to suit. There was so little cross-talk on this system that one experimental record had Vera Lynn singing on one channel and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony on the other! Decca's associates, Teldec of Germany, had been working on another system, a lateral cut plus a hill-and-dale cut to record the different channels. It was installed at the Hampstead studios for demonstration and development purposes, and the decision was made to adopt this Teldec system. Already there were rumours that the American Westrex company were working on a similar system, but with the

tracks in a 45/45 degree presentation, the LP characteristic we know today.

There was fear that with more than one system chaos would come upon the industry. It brought about much travelling to Europe and America, in which Haddy took a leading role, to sort out the problem. The Westrex system was eventually adopted at a meeting in Europe of the world's gramophone companies. Haddy conceded that the

Westrex 45/45 system was the better of the two, and Decca's stereophonic-recorded repertoire began in 1954.

And so, in 1989, the year celebrating the centenary of the disc sound record, there passed from us a man who contributed greatly to the advancement of the art and science of sound recording, and who additionally made an important contribution towards the defeat of the Nazi war machine.

FRANK ANDREWS

Mr. HADDY

by JACK LAW

MR. HADDY WAS MY BOSS for thirty years. His death was not unexpected - his health had been deteriorating for some time. Nevertheless the announcement left me feeling strangely unquiet. The enigma of the man who appeared to have no close friends, yet who rejoiced in company, has to remain unresolved.

When I joined the staff at Decca Studios in 1950 Mr. Haddy's reputation had preceded him. Stories of unpredictable temper, staff going about in fear, etc., were ringing in my ears, such that I stood before him in great trepidation one day in December 1949. It was then that I first heard the term "Boy". I was to hear it many times from then on. "There's no mystery in radio, Boy". "This is the way to do it, Boy". And perhaps most famous of all; "Trouble Boy?" When I worked in a dubbing room it was uncanny how Mr. Haddy would appear just after I had struck a problem with the cutter. One look, followed by "Trouble Boy"? his grey jacket would be discarded, a cigarette lit, and soon the machine would be cutting the master again. Nor was I the only one to experience this phenomenon: many of my erstwhile colleagues can relate stories of Mr. Haddy's extraordinary knack of appearing at the wrong (or was it the right?) time. Again, we could spend hours looking for a particular tiny screw,

or nut, or other component. Mr. Haddy would walk in, take a cursory look around, and then - "Is this what you're looking for Boy"? Of course, it always was.

Mr. Haddy was not an easy man to have as a chief. Short-tempered, and with a strident Berkshire voice, he could quickly cow the spirit of anyone having the temerity to question his judgement. And yet I well remember occasions when he would sit in with his engineers, discussing a problem, suggesting a course of action, but also listening to other courses. Experimentation was the name of the game in those days: experimentation and enthusiasm go together, and I think it was when British Standards and Din Norms began to infiltrate the studios that Arthur Haddy's interest began to wane. No longer was one free to "try this, Boy". It was already standardised from some distant source.

My memories of Mr. Haddy are of heated rows and most valued discussions, of flying temper - and comic anecdotes in the small canteen after working hours. A most difficult man and, I believe, a lonely one. Like him or hate him (and I experienced both sentiments) the plain fact is that his untiring devotion to the art of recording inspired everybody, and was responsible for the fine achievements of Decca in the post-war years.

People, Paper & Things

by George Frow

THE LABELS ON both sides of HMV B.4263 saying "Recorded at Monte Carlo" have always been a puzzle, although of no great moment. Reading Jack Hulbert's autobiography (*The Little Woman's Always Right*, 1975) I note he goes some way towards explaining this. It seems that after filming "Jack's the Boy" in 1932 he joined his wife and friends on the Riviera for a holiday but, not having recorded the hit tunes from the film, was pursued to Monte Carlo by Gramophone Company staff who fixed up the local hotel ballroom to make the recordings. Jack Hulbert, apparently unaware, was called off the beach and appeared "in a bathing slip" to make the recordings. He reports these needed two takes and were recorded in just under the hour. The songs were, of course, "The Flies Crawled up the Window" and "I want to Cling to Ivy", and the matrix numbers on my own version are OH7 11 and OH8 11. The passage of years caused some minor incongruities in Hulbert's memory: he mentions only the first song, and that the band was four strong, but on both sides it sounds as if there are more musicians. In those days the Hulberts used to go to the Riviera with the Bobby Howes family, and were sometimes seen on the beaches in the glossy magazines of the day such as *The Sphere* and *The Tatler*.

* * *

1989 was a special year for a group of people in Manchester, the Nymphs and Shepherds Association, all survivors of the massed children's choir who recorded Columbia 9909 on Tuesday June 18th 1929. Through radio interviews with some of the members it seems the choir was made up from 52 Elementary Schools run by Manchester Education Committee, and was the idea of the Musical Education Officer, Dr. Walter Carroll, whose First Piano Tutor some readers may recall. Sir Hamilton Harty, then regularly recording for Columbia, was persuaded to ask that company to send its equipment to the Free Trade Hall to record the choir with strings and woodwinds of the Hallé Orchestra. Columbia had

reservations, borne out by poor singing on the first two waxes made. Sir Hamilton Harty and the orchestra then retired and the chorus mistress, Gertrude Riall, upbraided the choristers. Two successful recordings followed. There were 190 girls (nymphs) and 60 boys (shepherds) in the choir, and the reverse side they made was the Dance Duet from *Hansel and Gretel*. The matrix numbers on my version are WAX 5057-2 and WAX 5058-1.

There are about 146 survivors, and how clear are many of their memories of that period in their lives. All of them stressed the difficulty they had in shedding their broad local accents: they were trained to sing every syllable phonetically. One can but listen to the record with fresh ears, especially in passages like "now, now now . . . now, now now", apparently so difficult to achieve. Last year they were given a golden disc by EMI to mark the success of a record that has never been out of the catalogue in one form or another.

* * *

The BBC "Children's Hour" used to be a daily highspot for millions of youngsters. Sadly it was overtaken about 30 years ago by the 'telly' and by a trendy Corporation who thought the programme too élitist, whatever that means. From personal memories of the early thirties, the Uncles and Aunties (later called Aunts) became teatime members of the family. Children's Hour came on at 5 o'clock, and finished with the reading out of Birthdays ("Hullo Twins") just before the 6 o'clock News. It was presided over by Uncle Mac (Derek McCulloch), Uncle David (David Davis), Aunt Elizabeth (May Jenkin) and others, like Aunt Sophie (Cecil Dixon), who made a couple of piano records for Columbia (DB 1713 and 1735). There were other groups of Uncles and Aunts in the Regions, from where the main features were often broadcast nationally.

Older members will recall the historical playlets, often by L. du Garde Peach or Franklyn Kelsey, with generally a peasant or soldier part for the mild and down-trodden Richard Gooden (in real life a proponent of public

executions), school stories, detective and adventure yarns, speakers like the Zoo Man, Walford Davies, Adrian Boulton or the Astronomer Royal, all fairly important people in their day; and the Friday Current Affairs talks by Commander Stephen King-Hall. Leading them all in popularity was Toytown. Its characters nearly assumed the fame of the later ITMA creations. Everybody loved Toytown, and even today if the topic arises we older boys (and girls) can wax warmly about episodes and characters remembered, a delightful mixture of people and animals. There were just over 20 stories written by S.G. Hulme Beaman, who then died, but we never tired of their being performed time and again. They stretched the imagination much more than any visual presentation. Being so long ago it seemed unlikely that the BBC would have bothered to record them, but two Toytown stories, as well as other Children's Hour material (Wind in the Willows, etc.) have been unearthed by the BBC at Bush House, I understand, and made available on two cassettes, with short introductions by David Davis, still occasionally broadcasting in his 80s. The Toytown stories last nearly half-an-hour each, and feature Derek McCulloch as Larry the Lamb, with several other actors in original parts. At a presumptive guess these World Service recordings must date from the mid-fifties. For that reason, much missed from the tapes are Ralph de Rohan as Mr. Growser; Freddie Burtwell as Peter Brass the Pirate; and Reginald Purdell as The Inventor, and whose spell-brewing as The Magician could easily make the rest of the cast laugh. Their successors manage adequately. If this is of your generation and you like looking backwards, it is more than likely that you will find these cassettes to your liking, and younger members might enjoy giving them a spin. After all, if we didn't like nostalgia we wouldn't collect old recordings. (CHILDREN'S HOUR: BBC Enterprises. Two cassettes ZBBC 1028, cost £5.99)

* * *

Thanks to a kind member from near London the American video TALKING FURNITURE has been converted from 525 lines to the European 625 mode, and is available to the Regional Groups to

borrow. I will be happy to handle this. The video lasts for 55 minutes and is an insight into collecting in America, with glimpses of rare machines and record extracts, with comments from some prominent collectors there.

My thanks to those several members with television connections who were kind enough to respond to my note asking for help in converting this video. I understand there is a possibility of a further programme one day.

* * *

With the death of Alberto Semprini at the age of 81, a link with the Italian school of opera of the 1920s has been broken. Through his radio series "Semprini's Serenade", from 1949 and decades following, he established a huge radio audience who enjoyed his piano renditions of the more familiar classics or light trifles, always introduced as "old ones, new ones, loved ones, neglected ones", appealing readily to all tastes. A master of his vocation he made scores of records for HMV as soloist or with his Serenade Orchestra, often in his own compositions or arrangements.

Semprini was born in Bath, Somerset, of an Italian horn player and an English soprano. He was educated at Bath and in the Conservatorio Verdi, being noticed by both Toscanini and Puccini. After becoming a Magisterio in conducting, piano and composition, he conducted in many Italian opera houses, and in this capacity is found on some records of singers of the day. He was pianist at La Scala for a while.

Semprini soon showed that he was capable of more than one style of music, and in 1933 formed a piano-playing partnership with Bormioli, touring on the Continent and making records for Italian HMV and Parlophon. More often than not their repertory was lightweight rhythmic pieces. He then formed his own Rhythm Orchestra for Italian radio. Caught in Italy during the war he went into hiding until able to cross the lines as the Allies slowly advanced, and he entertained troops with his piano for ENSA. He retired to Italy in 1982 and returned to Britain in 1988.

Letters

"Consols are Going Up"

Dear Ted,

I know that Frank Andrews likes to get things right, and in your OOPS! column you indicate a similar preference, albeit in tones of some embarrassment. So, let me do this one for you.

On page 291, in the Andrews/Watts tale of Pathé records in Britain, we read "Later there was a machine called the Saphone, both table and consol, which often had a Pathé motor and always a Pathé soundbox. It had a tapered tone-arm . . ." Leaving aside for the moment this singular machine's ability to alter its spec. (on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis, one wonders), let us consider what a 'consol' might be.

It is not a word I have met before in the singular, but in the plural it is a kind of government stock (Consols - short for Consolidated Annuities). James Forsyte was keen on them, you may recall; hence his dying words, quoted above. Perhaps what the authors meant was 'console'. (Yes, they did: I left an 'e' off. [Ed.]) If so, they did not mean any such thing, if you will pardon the expression.

A console cabinet gramophone is one in which the width is, or at least appears to be, greater than the height. As a type, it appeared in the early 1920s, was popular by the end of that decade, and in the radiogram era became the most common shape of cabinet. (Why this happened, I will not bore you with here, but the fact that it did explains how the original meaning became lost).

In 1915 the console cabinet gramophone was unknown as a type; a console was something organists used. What appeared under the Saphone name, apart from table models, would have been cabinet models, or cabinet grands. They would have been of the upright pattern normal at that time.

Now, that tapered tone-arm. I cannot recall ever seeing a Saphone with a tapered arm. Then again, I have seen

very few Saphones of any sort except for one model, which is identical in all but name to the Pathé Elf. Very often, this comes with no arm at all, because the arm is removable, and has to be removed before the lid can be shut. It is possible, with care, to lay it in exactly the right place on the turntable once it is detached, so that the lid can close over it, but not everyone is born careful, and many Elf and Saphone tone-arms are lost. When they are extant, they are most definitely not tapered.

All I have to do now, to enrich my experience and to render this whole epistle null and void, is to find a Saphone horizontal grand with a tapered tone-arm and a non-Pathé motor. If anyone has one, just send me a photo, not the machine: console models I have always considered to be the most uncollectable gramophones of all, since they occupy as much space as two or even three uprights, and contain no more gramophone than a table grand!

Yours sincerely, Christopher Proudfoot
Fawkham, Kent 4th December

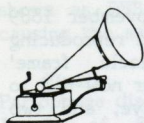
The Parlophone Historical Series

Dear Ted,

My deliberately (slightly) provocative comments regarding Columbia prefix numbers bore fruit as far as I was concerned. I certainly did not know that in W.E.R.M. there existed a list of the International prefixes. In my many years of collecting I have yet to acquire a copy of this important book. I shall redouble my efforts to obtain one.

Thank you for your careful and constructive review, by George Taylor, of our 'Parlophone Historical Series Vol.1' L.P. I must accept responsibility for the error in spelling Giuseppe Anselmi's first name. Mr. Taylor is correct.

Perhaps a word of explanation is needed regarding the material included in Volume 1. The tracks follow the order (numerically) of the Parlophone Historical Series as it was issued. The gaps in the numbers represent other PO and PXO issues which were outside the scope of the series, hence the inclusion of the



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(originally) Odeon piano roll recordings in their position in this group. Reference to a British Parlophone catalogue circa 1940 will show the complete listing.

In common with many other 'complete' series, the later issues seem the hardest to acquire. It seems many collectors start with a burst of enthusiasm which peters out as time goes by. Volume II is therefore not likely to be in total agreement with this plan: there are a couple of sides still to be found. We will therefore issue Volume II using the material which has come to hand, and the last volume will contain the missing items, when they are found, to complete the series, as an 'addendum'.

I am stressing with our co-producers, Avan Guard Music, the desirability of CD issue, both for this and later issues. However, response to the existing item will dictate the feasibility of this. Perhaps Volume II will have a CD option. We have now located many items for Volumes II and III, from as far afield as Adelaide, Melbourne, and Paris. The master tape for the Caruso "recreations" is complete, all taken from excellent laminated copies with their low surface noise, and all but two of the entire Victor Heritage Series have been procured for a forthcoming issue of these fine vinyl facsimiles.

Very best wishes, David McCallum
Glebe, N.S.W., Australia, 27th December

About That Spring Motor

Dear Ted,

All readers must have been impressed by the superb restoration work done by Miles Mallinson on his Edison Spring Motor Phonograph shown in the December issue, made all the clearer by good photographic prints.

Being heavily in the throes of researching Edison phonographs, I was interested to notice an Emerson Instantaneous Speaker Clamp on the carrier-arm. The more usually-found speaker clamps on these machines of the 1890s are worthy of brief notice. The 1880s for a few months had the recording and reproducing phonets held down by screw-heads, but the arrival of

the Standard Speaker in November 1889 with combined recording and reproducing ability made the 'spectacle frame' obsolete because the speaker now had to turn in the carrier-arm eye, and two crescent-shaped clamping plates allowed the speaker lever to be moved from the 'ten past the hour' position of playing the recording to the 'twenty-past the hour' for recording. These plates were held down by two fiddly knurled screws in each plate and Emerson's clamp (US Patent No. 567,738, filed 20th December 1895, gazetted 15th September 1896) superseded these for a short time until overtaken by the more efficient pair of clamping levers. These lasted until the beginning of 1902 when the Model C Reproducer was put on sale and a single knurled screw through the carrier-arm was the last and most familiar development.

Victor Emerson, an Edison employee, crossed the road to become a recording expert with Columbia, and then formed his own record company.

Yours sincerely, George Frow
Sevenoaks, Kent, 29th December

A Few Points

Dear Sir,

May I first say how much I have enjoyed reading "The Hillandale News" since joining the CLPGS four years ago?

May I comment on these items? Peter Cliffe's article on Reginald King was excellent, but it contains a statement that "June Night on Marlow Reach" has never been recorded. It has - by Sandy Macpherson, on the second BBC Theatre Organ, on Columbia FB 2894, with another lovely light composition, "An April Shower at Kew", by Haydn Wood. My collection of Theatre Organ discs also contains a 10" Columbia of Quentin MacLean playing "Lily of Laguna" and "Little Dolly Daydream" on the Regal Marble Arch Christie Organ, bearing the catalogue number DBB 13. I have two other copies of this disc labelled DB 13, one a late shellac pressing, the other laminated. All these copies have the same matrices, WA 9945/WA 9958. Could it be that just a first printing of the labels of the first few DB discs were

shown as DBB, with a change of policy causing the middle B later to be omitted?

Finally, I have an Australian Parlophone disc with a stroboscopic label. It is of Pierre Palla playing the Tuschinski Organ, Amsterdam, from Dutch Odeon masters, Cat. number A 4340.

Yours sincerely, Terry Hepworth
Lowestoft, Suffolk, 15th January

. . . and a Few More

Sir,

George Frow's observations in December prompt me to write about another glaring example of a built-in fault on a record. I own a copy of "Dort vergib leises Fleh'n" from 'The Marriage of Figaro'. It's sung in German by the bass Paul Knüpfer and is probably better known as "Non più andrai" or "Now your days of philandering are over". It is on one side of a double-sided green label Schallplatte Grammophon 10" disc. About three-quarters of the way through there is a distinct rise of at least a semitone in Knüpfer's voice and the accompaniment for several seconds. Several fellow collectors who have heard it are of the opinion that the recording lathe must have been slowed momentarily, perhaps by someone inadvertently touching the edge of the wax, or even by a fault in the mechanism. Even I, with my unmusical ears, wince at the fluctuation, so it is difficult to see why the record was passed for issue, particularly as Knüpfer had recorded the same item on at least two previous occasions, and presumably this later version was intended to be technically and acoustically superior to the earlier recordings.

While on the subject of Schallplatte Grammophon records, I agree with you about the ramifications and complications of the electrical recording symbols used on HMV records (your note on Paul Collenette's letter in the December "Hillandale") I have a black label Schallplatte Grammophon, 10" double-sided record of the baritone Leopold Demuth. Both sides were recorded in Vienna in 1905, but in each case the matrix number is followed by a small triangle. Demuth died in 1910, a full 15 years before the advent of commercial

electrical recording. Beware the triangles, Mr. Collenette!

Finally, to kill three birds with one letter, may I comment on George Taylor's excellent review of the latest Nimbus recordings? I note that the sound transfer was effected by the "brilliantly simple" method of playing the records acoustically on a horn gramophone and placing a microphone in the bell of the horn. With some pride I may point out that Christopher Proudfoot and I used exactly the same system for the recordings we used in the BBC Radio Midway series "The Talking Machine", broadcast in 1982/1983. I gave technical details in a letter in the June 1982 "Hillandale". I have just listened to some of the programmes again and I find that some of the transfers are of a very high quality indeed. Perhaps we should seek a royalty from Nimbus for using the Proudfoot-Johnson system of sound transfer.

Yours faithfully, Colin S. Johnson
Minster-on-Sea, Sheerness, 15th January

"Soldiers of The Queen"

Dear Sir,

George Frow's interesting account of Ion Colquhoun in October's "Hillandale News", with notes on the famous song "Soldiers of the Queen", has reminded me of early cylinder records of it in my collection, and its striking historical associations. It appears that this ballad was first sung by the British soldiers in the Sudan, following the murder of General Gordon at Khartoum in 1883. It became popular in Britain during the 1890s and, after being rewritten as an army recruiting song by Stuart, was published by Francis, Day and Hunter, London. The Boer War broke out in South Africa on 12th October 1899, and it has become mainly associated with those hostilities, which ended officially on 30th May 1902. From Frank Andrews' notes George lists the earliest cylinder recording of this song by Colquhoun as of 1903, but some were made in 1900 and 1901 by the latter and by other singers. In "Joe Batten's Book. The Story of Sound Recording" (Rockcliff Publishing Corporation, London 1956, pp.32 and 33)

Batten recalls that in 1900 he played piano accompaniments for cylinder recordings of songs at the small office and studio of the Musiphone Company, in Hatton Garden, London. One of the artists was Colquhoun, singing "Soldiers of the Queen".

In my collection are three wax cylinders of this stirring song. They are:

1. An Edison-Bell & Edisonia Grand Concert Record of medium brown wax, in its original box bearing the number 1032, evidently dating from 1900-early 1901. It is announced as "'The Soldiers of the Queen', sung by Mr. Eric Farr, London Record". This is a good clear recording playing for about three minutes.

2. A battered standard sized cylinder of pale brown wax, announced as "The great patriotic song, 'Soldiers of the Queen', sung by Mr. Ion Colquhoun as rendered by him over four hundred consecutive nights at the Alhambra Theatre, London". There is applause at the end, probably to suggest a stage performance. These performances, in fact over 440, formed part of a "Vocal Ballet" of the same name begun on 3rd October 1899. One can imagine the intense patriotic fervour for Queen and Country in the audiences of that period, rising to an astonishing level following the Relief of Mafeking in May 1900. This record was no doubt made just after, in January 1901. It sounds like an Edisonia recording yet is quite anonymous. In a letter to me Frank Andrews considered that it may well be the work of Symond's London Stores, Hatton Garden, founded in 1900 which, although it issued some original recordings, was guilty of unauthorised duplication of many records by various other firms. It might even be by the obscure Musiphone Company.

3. An Edison Gold Moulded Record, No.7181, 1903-04, re-recorded title from 1899-1900. This is announced as "'The Soldiers of the Queen' sung by J.J. Fisher, Edison Record."

After the death of Queen Victoria in January 1901 and the Coronation of Edward VII in August 1902, the title was sometimes listed as "The Soldiers of the King". Remarkably this emotive song has

lingered in folk memory for over a century, when such contemporary ballads as Kipling's "The Absent Minded Beggar" are only recalled in historical books and specialist record releases.

Yours sincerely, J.N. Carreck
Henfield, Sussex, 4th January



Shackleton's Gramophone

Dear Ted,

Thanks for printing the Shackleton record story. All that remains to be established is whether the 1910 Victor 70014 is a reissue of the 1909 HMV disc or a new recording. The latter seems more likely, and the matrix number would give the answer.

By coincidence I am reading Shackleton's account of his expedition. They took along a gramophone but there is not much reference to it in the book. However, there are two good photos reproduced in the first edition of 1909. The gramophone and its records are shown in the hut in one picture. I can't say what make the machine is, but it looks typical of 1907 with a morning glory horn, somewhat bent. Did the Gramophone Company donate the gramophone as it did later to Scott? Heaps of records without their envelopes are shown. The top records look as though they may be green label Zonophones but the labels are difficult to make out. The second picture shows the gramophone being played outside to a group of admiring penguins. This picture reminds me of Ponting's picture, in the Scott expedition of 1910-12, of a husky gazing into the horn of a gramophone: it was reproduced on the cover of "Hillandale News" No.139.

Cheers, George Taylor
Harrogate, N.Yorks, 5th February

SONORA RECORDS DISCOGRAPHY

Dear Mr. Cunningham,

May I correct several statements made by Mr. George Frow in his review of **Norwegian Discographies No.2: Sonora Records**. Firstly Mr. Frow states, quite mistakenly, that "all the artists here are Scandinavian". Not so. Obviously Marian Anderson is not Scandinavian, and obviously neither is Benny Carter. These two issues, 166 and 282, were derivatively issued on Norwegian Sonora from respectively, German **Artiphon** and Swedish **Sonora**. Secondly, absent, approximately, 44 completely blank sides for which no corresponding details at all are given, from about March/April 1935 down thru the end of the German occupation period, it would be correct to state that the percentage of sides of Swedish-cut origin would be, about, at maximum, 95.6%. Only approximately 4% is of German-cut origin, deriving in part from Artiphon, Tri-Ergon, Kristall and, possibly, Clausophon. Less than 0.5% derives from British Homophone's Sterno label matrix sequence; only a solitary issue (115).

The statement that the Norwegian Sonora label catalogue was augmented by Danish Tono artists appears to imply that there was some degree of contemporaneity between July 1935 and March 1937, of material cut in Stockholm and in Copenhagen. This is terribly off the mark since, as of March 1937 the Danish Tono label had not even been founded. And there is the further incorrect implication that material from these two sources were approximately simultaneously derivatively released on Norwegian Sonora. Not so. Such connection as there was between Norwegian Sonora and Danish Tono did not occur until the early post-war period, probably slightly more than eight years after the founding of Danish Tono. Thus, thru 1946 the Danish Tono-derived repertoire on Norwegian Sonora represented less than 1.4% of the entire catalogue. It is, of course, possible theoretically, that several of the blanks could contain additional Danish Tono label-derived material.

Sincerely yours, Harold Flakser
Brooklyn, New York, 12th November

We sent Mr. Flakser's letter to Tom Valle, compiler of the SONORA RECORDS DISCOGRAPHY reviewed by George Frow. Mr. Valle has sent us the following reply:

"I must be permitted to make some remarks on Mr. Flakser's letter. Firstly, Mr. George Frow has written a splendid review of the book, making only one small incorrect statement, which I did not notice when reading the review. Marian Anderson and Benny Carter are not Scandinavian artists. (The record was recorded in Stockholm with Swedish musicians). These are the only two non-Scandinavian artists in the two Sonora catalogue number series given by name. The book lists about 300 or so records. It is excusable to make such a small mistake.

The book has a preface in Norwegian, and shorter versions in English and German. The English preface states that the Sonora was augmented by Danish Tono artists. It is quite correct. The Sonora label had a life-span of about 20 years in Norway from 1935. The label did not exist merely from June 1935 to March 1937. This is the time when the Norwegian recordings were made (all in Sweden). When Telefunken got the representation, about August 1937, they had their own recording studio in Oslo, and for that reason stopped making and issuing Norwegian recordings on Sonora. Instead they used the label for low-priced Swedish and Danish records.

The German-cut recordings are all issued as Sonora Salon-Orchestra or Orkester Tzigane, an anonymous artist-credit. They play the usual music for such orchestras. It has not been possible to find any sources giving the correct names of these performers.

One must point out that discographical work in Norway is very difficult. On Sonora no recording book exists for the Norwegian records; no complete catalogue set exists, and no complete set of records. This is the reason for the blank numbers. For these reasons, which apply to every record company operating in Norway before the war, it is impossible to make a complete discography of almost any pre-war label.

Sincerely yours, Tom Valle
Oslo, Norway, 29th January

PLAYBACK

by PETER COPELAND

QUESTION: Why are records black?

ANSWER: Because it's easier to see the grooves. The question is often asked, but I've never seen the correct reply. Yes, that's it.

On an ordinary record (not those new-fangled compact disc things), the sound is encapsulated as small wiggles in the groove walls. When there's no sound the groove has no wiggles. If you go into the mathematics of it you find that 'silent' grooves (typically quieter than 50 decibels below peak volume) have wiggles tinier than the wavelength of visible light, which is less than a thousandth of a millimetre. So 'silent' groove walls should reflect light perfectly. They do this irrespective of the actual colour of the material, but when it's black the reflection shows up with maximum contrast.

If there is a fuzzy reflection it shows that the groove walls are rougher than one-thousandth of a millimetre, and that means quite bad surface noise. The chap in charge of a faulty pressing machine could take one look at his work and sling it out without even having to play it.

In the early days of record making, master waxes had to be processed before the artists could hear a playback, because heavyweight soundboxes would damage them. This made it difficult to check a recording during a session, so engineers quickly learnt to look at the reflected light to check for low background noise. And it didn't take them long to learn how to look at a wax and say whether the recording was likely to 'blast' or not. Their technique used reflected light in a slightly different way. In 1930 Messrs. Buchmann and Meyer put the whole thing on a scientific basis. They illuminated record grooves with a narrow parallel beam of light, and observed that where there WAS sound (deliberately), the groove walls reflected the beam to the left and right, instead of straight back. If one measured

the apparent widening of the reflected beam, they proved it was proportional to the to-and-fro velocity of the stylus which cut the sound waves.

As a direct result of this it was possible to make records of electronic test-frequencies and see objectively whether it was the cutter or the playback system which was responsible for any errors. (Before the days of dependable pickups there was no sure way to tell the difference). Engineers doing checks before a recording session used the "Buchmann-Meyer Image" to check their equipment. Some studios had a piece of special apparatus the size of a gas-oven, which enclosed the wax in a lightproof box and illuminated it with collimated light. A mechanism including an eyepiece, some micrometer screw adjustments, graticules, and cross-wires, enabled the image to be measured accurately. Thus the performance of the recorder could be assessed without having to play or process the wax.

As I said earlier, a black background helps. You might not think it to look at me, but I'm just old enough to have cut wax discs myself. I can certainly confirm that the darker the wax, the easier it is to judge the recorded volume. I've never worked in a record factory, but I should imagine black records show up all sorts of other faults very clearly. My black car certainly shows dirt with great efficiency!

When various fancy-coloured 'picture' discs appeared in the 1980s, reviewers complained not only that the motive was to extract more money from the determined collector, but that the records had noisier surfaces. Some of this might have been due to different chemicals in the plastic, but I'd say a good deal of it was because it was virtually impossible to check the performance with the naked eye.

What a pity Miller-Morris cylinder blanks are white!

A Scarlet Woman

by Peter Adamson

MANY COLLECTORS WILL BE AWARE that after the coming of the famous Red G & T label on 10" discs, some of the most prestigious 7" Berliner discs were converted to this high status by having the central area of the stampers flattened to allow the labels to be included in the pressing process. Figner and Vialtseva were the lucky ones in Russia, and there were also some slightly later examples of the 7" Gramophone Record Red Seal (as it was called) - Primo Vitti in 1902 for example. As a keen collector of early 7" records, I eagerly note anything of this sort which is out of the ordinary. So it is all the more surprising for me to find that I should have had for many years without realising it, a 7" Red Berliner! It is (naturally) a Russian disc made in St. Petersburg, and issued in June 1901 with catalogue number 23072. On it, a soprano with a rather plummy voice sings a typical Russian song entitled "Under the spell of your caresses". But the oddest thing about this disc - in fact the only really notable thing - is the lady's name. Having by now become accustomed to seeing such esoteric things as Davidov Berliners, Morskoi Berliners, Figner Berliners, etc., I was quite amused to find that I had indeed managed to acquire a RED Berliner. The matrix number, although obscure, seems to be 2558, recorded around the beginning of April 1901 - possibly the 1st. The singer's name? Madame G.L. Red . . .

75 Years Ago

from The Talking Machine News
April 1915

A NOVEL MUSIC HALL TURN

MR. ARTHUR SLATER . . . appears on the stage in his surprisingly clever and original turn. A knock at the door is first of all heard, and Arthur presents himself to the audience on the invitation of a gramophone, which exclaims "Come in, don't stand knocking!" "I didn't know there was anyone in," continues the artiste. Then follows a witty dialogue between artiste and gramophone occasioned by a specially prepared record. "It" (the gramophone) invites him to join "It" in a duet - he whistles sweetly, and "It" gives piano accompaniment. After some interval, though the instrument is not touched, he whistles "Zampa" Overture as a solo, while "It" gives full orchestral accompaniment. Mr. Slater could never get a real orchestra to play satisfactorily to his whistling, he says, until he met "His Master's Voice" gramophone. The audience are electrified by the turn.

Book Review

By George Frow

WITH THE RECENT publication of Volume XIV, Wendell Moore completes the run of bound copies of EDISON PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY and we must compliment him. They were issued to the trade from the Edison works, and outlined forthcoming cylinders and any changes in the phonographs from 1903 to 1916. Particularly, there are biographical sketches of Edison artists and much to do with the promotion of the products. In the last years Diamond Discs and their machines are also featured, but after January 1917 E.P.M. divided, the cylinder business being cared for by EDISON AMBEROLA MONTHLY and the Discs by DIAMOND POINTS. These volumes are smartly bound in maroon cloth, gilt finished, and cost \$25.00 each, post paid, but prices should be confirmed as I am not sure whether all issues are now available. Enquiries should be made to Wendell Moore, [redacted] Sedona, AZ 86336, U.S.A. All of us in the hobby are greatly in the debt of Wendell Moore for chancing this venture in the first place. Congratulations to him on the achievement, after 15 years, of a first class series.

London Meetings

MULTIPLE CHOICE

by A.O. Leon-Hall

YOU WILL BE GLAD to learn that Colin Johnson is restored to his customary rude health. He delivered his postponed record recital at our January meeting, and thus achieves the distinction of heading two consecutive editions of this column. The cryptic meaning of his title "Go Forth and Multiply" emerged as the evening progressed. He began with a solo - as solo as you can get; the unaccompanied voice of Kathleen Ferrier singing "Blow the Wind Southerly". Then followed, in order, a duet, a trio, a quartet and a quintet (The Western Brothers/"Qual voluttà" from 'I Lombardi' /The Gresham Singers, "Come to the Fair"/E scherzo od è follia" from 'Un ballo in maschera').

Once having caught Mr. Johnson's drift one was tempted to speculate on what would ensue. Whose septet would he give us? Beethoven's Opus 20? No; it was the Seven Dwarfs' "Hi-ho" chorus from Walt Disney's "Snow White". Whose octet? Mendelssohn's? Schubert's? Spohr's? Again no: J.H. Squire's Celeste Octet played the evergreen "Hearts and Flowers".

I was betting heavily that when we reached the number 16 it would have to be Vaughan Williams' "Serenade to Music", but I lost, because Colin jumped straight from the octet to a gathering of 26, The Temple Church Choir. Progressively larger forces followed: The Luton Girls' Choir, The Manchester Children's Choir (250 voices), The Associated Glee Clubs of America (850). We reached the dizzy height of 3,000 voices (Daily Express Community Singing) and then, dizzier still, 10,000 (The Methodist Union Conference at the Royal Albert Hall, the additional 7,000 throats making no difference that I could perceive).

Colin Johnson presented this logarithmic exercise with all the aplomb one expects from a professional broadcaster. How nice if it had been delivered through an exponential horn.

OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES

by Len Watts

OUR SOCIETY EXISTS for the encouragement of the enjoyment of sound recordings, and the means of hearing them of whatever age. Whilst many members use machines contemporary with the recordings being heard we do not discourage modern technology. Thus, at our February London meeting the two extreme aspects of sound recording were brought together in a programme of Historic Reissues on Compact Disc, ably presented by an erstwhile Secretary of our Society, Gordon Bromly. Also in the audience we were pleased to see Eliot Levin, proprietor of Symposium Records, who has done so much to provide issues of worthwhile historic recordings (some previously not issued) on LP and CD, and who provided us with a chance of acquiring some of his products at trade prices.

The programme started appropriately with the Berliner recording "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" of 1890, followed by other recordings from the nineties, including Sousa's Band, Leslie Stuart and Leonid Sobinov. Another CD brought many rarities such as a blue Zonophone of Fanny Torsella and some red G&Ts (Kaschmann, Pandolfini). A further CD contained many Pathé cylinders of French baritones (Faure, Melchissédec, Soulacroix, etc.) whilst an EMI CD was demonstrated by a track of Jascha Heifetz dating from 1937.

Nimbus CDs were also demonstrated, in which recordings are taken from an acoustic EMG gramophone. We heard examples of Tetrizzini, McCormack, Tibbett, Martinelli, Eva Turner, Tauber, etc. Also we heard a "cleaned-up" version of Peter Dawson's "Now your days of philandering are over".

It was gratifying to see a room packed to capacity, and we have to thank visitors from our sister society, the RVAS, some new members, ourselves, and Eliot Levin for a most enjoyable evening.

HERE & THERE

LEEDS MEETING

IN FEBRUARY the Northern Gramophone and Phonograph Group met at the Armley Industrial Museum, Leeds, to hear a talk by record collector and writer Dr. Alan Kelly (author of "HMV, The Italian Catalogue 1898-1929"; Greenwood Press). Dr. Kelly's interest in records began just after World War Two when record companies were recycling shellac from older records. Issues by prominent artists were withdrawn hastily and not reissued, so that some serious records of the period can be difficult to trace. Alan's talk dealt with the methods and sources used to compile his publication, which necessitated much research and consultation with others, access to Victor and EMI ledgers, checking and rechecking, and clarification of dates. Alan explained the intricacies of the HMV system; the use of matrix numbers and the names of the engineers recording the artists. Listeners were able to examine copies of documents from various archives, showing matrix/catalogue numbers, artists, and recording dates. Some were difficult to decipher, and not in strict chronological order; hence all the checking and rechecking. Two future meetings, both to be at the Armley Industrial Museum, Armley, Leeds: **22nd April:** MILES MALLINSON talks about his reconstructed Edison Spring Motor. **15th July:** Speaker to be confirmed (or conscripted!) Those interested please contact the Yorkshire Secretary: John Astin, [redacted] N.Yorkshire HG1 3LL.

CHILTERNS BRANCH

A meeting will be held on **SUNDAY 13th MAY** at 2.15 p.m. in Pyrford Village Hall. Why not go along taking a favourite disc, cylinder, or machine? If you intend to go, please advise **DAVE ROBERTS** at [redacted] Surrey GU22 8TN

EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH

JOHN GOMER wishes to start an East Anglian Branch of the Society. Those

interested in joining please contact him at [redacted] Colchester CO1 2NH, or instead write to A.D. BESFORD at [redacted] Caister, NR30 5NZ

MIDLAND BRANCH

Ill-health has compelled GERRY BURTON to give up the Secretaryship of the CLPGS Midlands Branch. We wish him a swift recovery. **P. BENNETT** writes to say that he will be taking on the post, and can be contacted at [redacted] Wolverhampton WV6 0LH.

CLOCKWORK MUSIC GROUP

PHIL BAILEY advises the following programme for 1990. Meetings will be held in the Activities Room, Science Museum, Blandford Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Saturdays from 2 p.m. until 4.15 p.m.

May 12th: DAVE BAYNES: More unusual records

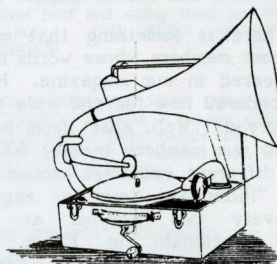
June 23rd: DAVID TRIGG presents Archive Films.

September 22nd: RAY STEPHENSON presents some of his favourite records.

December 8th: DEREK GREENACRE presents a Magic Lantern Show, including early slides of transport interest.

* * *

IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED again that we might publish a members' directory. The Committee has decided that the majority of members would not want their names included.



Get Your Name in the Hall of Fame

by Ted Cunningham

WELL, HERE WE ARE at the end of another "Hillandale News". Your Editor breathes a happy sigh, takes a fortifying draught of his cocoa, and then goes into deep shock as he realises he has nothing whatever to go in between the front cover and the back cover of the next edition. It happens every two months. So I hope that as you perused the last two-dozen pages, you will not only have been reasonably contented but also, maybe, inspired to contribute towards the **next** two-dozen pages: an article, a letter; even a disagreement or challenge.

The "Hillandale" has been going regularly for thirty years come October, solely as a means of communication between members of the CLPGS, and run **by** the members **for** the members, who are its main contributors. Just like a teapot or, indeed, life itself, what you get out of the journal depends a lot on what you put into it. So what about you, too?

Over the years I have had the good fortune to meet a great many talking-machine enthusiasts and record collectors. I haven't met one yet who didn't have at least one fascinating lump of knowledge, one interesting point of view. (Well, maybe there was just one, but I think he left.) Generally, in places where such people foregather, the problem is to STOP them going on and on about their particular speciality. One of the great attractions of our hobby is this endless multiplicity of particular specialities. My job is to persuade these enthusiasts to sit down and put their opinions on paper for the benefit of the entire membership.

Now, here is something that might interest those members whose words have already appeared in our magazine. Have you ever wondered how far and wide your wisdom is spread? Well, apart from being circulated to our members (nearly 800 of them in 26 different countries around the world) the "Hillandale News" is eagerly awaited, every two months, at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris; the National Library of Canada in Ottawa; the British Library (well, I should hope

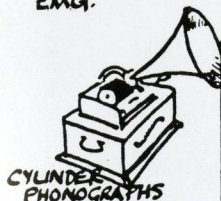
so!) and at Public Libraries in Detroit, Michigan; Stanford, California; and Los Angeles. The BBC Gramophone Library gets it, and the Westminster Central Music Library and the Surrey College Library. It is to be found in the National Museums of Scotland and Denmark; in the Science Museum Library, Kensington; the Center for Popular Music at the University of Mid-Tennessee, and the British Embassy in Peking, China. The Library of Congress in Washington actually orders TWO copies; one, presumably, for general passing-around among the Congressmen, the other for the use of their Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recording Department. You may therefore take pride, as I do, in the thought that your words and mine rest there alongside the Collected Letters of Groucho Marx. (That's true: I didn't make it up.)

I feel sure many good articles remain unwritten because somebody thinks he is no good at writing things down. Don't let that stop you. We do not require our members to have a degree in English Literature. We all know that nowadays there are Government Ministers and even (heavens above!) journalists, who have to have "spellcheck" machines before they will leave home in the morning. Your contribution will be accepted or rejected solely on whether we think what you have to say is of interest to the journal's readers. Up here on the top floor of the Hillandale Tower there is a vast Editorial Staff who like nothing more than to put your sentences into shape and unsplit the odd infinitive. Send illustrations if you can. Rough sketches can be redrawn: photographs are welcome. Our new printers can handle GOOD colour photographs, although GOOD black-and-white are still best for fine detail. Don't fret if your contribution doesn't appear in the next edition: we might hold it "in the bank" until the best slot appears.

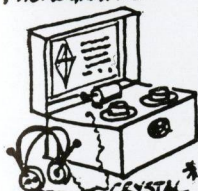
I've warned the Post Office to put a good strong man on this round. I'm looking forward to seeing all the stuff you are going to send in. Good Luck!



EMG.



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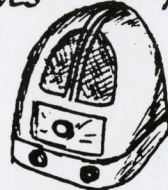
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